

## [Seth Roberts]

Form A

Circumstances of Interview No. 9

Vermont

C. F. Derven

Poultney

September 8, 1938

Subject——— Welsh-American [Eisteddvods?]

1. Interview on September 8, 1938 at 2:30 p. m.
2. At the Shell Gas Station on Beaman Street which is operated by the informant.
3. Informant— Mr. Seth Roberts, Main and Beaman St., Poultney, Vermont.
4. Paul G. Ross, Town Clerk of Poultney, advised me to visit the informant.
5. Unaccompanied
6. The informant's place of residence is in part of the historic Beaman house located at the corner of Main Street and Beaman Street. The building was once an inn on the old Turnpike route; and was one of the places where the stages stopped to change horses. The Turnpike, and the conveyances were the property of a company organized by the original owner of the aforesaid house, and his associates. The building is rather large, dull-green in color, and presents a very dull front to the street. It is, or course, of

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historic interest, but is not of unusual or attractive construction. The gas station, where the interview took place, is a small wooden structure of the familiar type. It reveals that the location is still advantageous to serving vehicles, and performing the functions which were, in the same category, performed in the past when horses were served.

Form B

Personal History of Informant

Vermont

C. F. [Derven?]

Poultney

September 14, 1938

Subject————— Mr. Seth Roberts, Main and Beaman Streets, Poultney, Vermont

1. Welsh ancestry
2. Born in Poultney, Vermont on March 13, 1880.
3. Single. He has two sisters, and one brother living; another brother deceased.
4. Lived in Poultney the majority of his life, but also lived in Middle Granville, N. Y. for some time.
5. Education—— Elementary
6. Quarrying interests, in this region, have been in his family for many years. The informant now [?] part of a slate-quarry with other members of his family. He operates a filling station at present, but has been a quarryman.

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7. The informant has command of both the Welsh and the English language. He subscribes to several Welsh publications. He is quite interested in quarry operation. Interested in horse-racing from the spectator point.

8. The informant is a man of medium stature, with good physical proportions. He has a round type of face, heavy eyebrows, full cheeks, brown eyes, and a rather wide mouth. He wears dark horn-rimmed spectacles for reading purposes. He has always had a checkered cap on his head when the interviewer has seen him. He has a slight tendency to lisping when speaking (perhaps due to certain sounds in Welsh which demand lingual dexterity unlike any other language that the informant has heard.). His speech is slow and deliberate.

9. The informant appreciates good Poetry, especially in Welsh. He has a well-developed sense of humor, and is a good conversationalist.

10. The informant's filling station is often occupied by several men who come in to have an evenings' conversation. It is a sort of meeting place for a group of friends.

Form C Text of Interview No. 9 (Unedited)

Vermont

C. F. Derven

Poultney

September 8, 1938

Subject——— Welsh-American Eisteddvods

Q. Mr. Roberts, I was told that you subscribe to a Welsh-American newspaper called, "Y Drich". Is that right?

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A. I've been getting it for a good many years.

Q. Was any of the Eisteddvods ever reported from Poultney to that paper?

A. Certainly.

Q. Do you happen to know when the first Eisteddvod was held in Poultney? I know of one in 1889.

A. I wouldn't be able to tell you when they had the first one. And the men who would are all dead. If you had been trying to find out ten years ago, it would have been easy. The first of the Welsh people around here came to Middle Granville, N.Y. to work in the quarries. Then quarries were opened in Jamesville, N.Y., and more came there. The quarries in Poultney were opened later. The first big Eisteddvods were held in Middle Granville. They may have had festivals in Poultney at that time, but they were only small ones. It's just like the difference between the Rutland Fair and the small carnivals that they have near here. Only the local people compete in the small festivals. But at those that were held in Middle Granville the competitors were from nearby towns as well.

Q. I have found a record of one in Middle Granville on May 1, 1888. It was reported in an edition of the Poultney Journal for of that date year which Mr. Humphrey showed me. He told me that he was in one of the Eisteddvods in 1889.

A. Yes. I knew that he played in them. You see, the early Eisteddvods in Middle Granville were larger than those held in Poultney, and the people from Poultney competed in the festivals there. It was only after years of small ones that Poultney had a regular Eisteddvod. There hasn't been a big Eisteddvod in Poultney for some time even now. They have been Church affairs, but they used to be held in the Town Hall.

Q. Then it would be difficult to find the date of the first Eisteddvod here because they were small affairs. I had better try to find the date of the first all-day session.

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A. That would be the best idea. I think you will be able to get that date from some of the older people.

Writers' Project:

All material contained herein is complete for the dates and informants named. However these informants may at some future time present me with more material which will be forwarded (with proper references to the previous interviews included). Other interviews not included are in different stages of completion.

C. F. Derven